

Claims

1. An apparatus for processing a fluid sample comprising:
 - (iv) a platform comprising:
 - (c) a chamber suitable for receiving a sample; and
 - (d) a functional component;
 - (v) an arm capable of being raised and lowered and including a means for removeably attaching to the functional component such that said component may be raised and lowered with the arm; and
 - (vi) a means for moving the platform such that any chamber or functional component may be aligned with respect to the arm.
2. An apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein the platform is circular.
3. An apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 2 wherein the arm mechanically removeably attaches to the functional component.
4. An apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 3 wherein the apparatus comprises a means for raising and lowering the arm in a substantially vertical direction.
5. An apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 4 wherein the functional component is used to remove an analyte from the sample in the chamber.
6. An apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein the chamber of the apparatus comprises a solid phase binding material capable of forming a complex with the analyte.

7. An apparatus according to Claim 6 wherein said solid phase binding material is silica.
8. An apparatus according to any of Claims 5 to 7 wherein the apparatus comprises a means for attracting said complex.
9. An apparatus according to Claim 8 wherein said means is a magnet.
10. An apparatus according to Claims 8 to 9 wherein said functional reagent is a sheath which provides an interface between the means for attracting the complex and the complex itself.
11. An apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 10 wherein the apparatus additionally comprises a physical processing means.
12. An apparatus according to Claim 11 wherein the physical processing means is a means for heating the contents of a chamber of the apparatus.
13. An apparatus according to Claim 11 wherein the physical processing means is a means for sonicating the contents of a chamber of the apparatus.
14. An apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 13 wherein the chamber of the apparatus is coated at least in part with an electrically conducting polymer.

15. An apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 14 wherein the apparatus comprises a chamber comprising pre-dispensed reagents.

16. An apparatus according to Claim 15 wherein the reagents are bound to further solid phase binding material.

17. Use of an apparatus according to Claim 1 for the processing of a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction.

18. A method of processing a fluid sample wherein the method comprises:

- (vii) placing a sample comprising an analyte into a first chamber located on a platform of an apparatus;
- (viii) binding the analyte to a binding material to form an analyte - binding material complex;
- (ix) lowering a means for reversibly attracting said complex into said first chamber and allowing the complex to be attracted to said means;
- (x) raising said means from the first chamber;
- (xi) moving said platform such that a second chamber is now aligned with the means for reversibly attracting said complex;
- (xii) lowering said means for reversibly attracting said complex into the second chamber and allowing the complex to detract from said means;

characterised in that the analyte is subjected to a physical processing step either in the first chamber or in the second chamber.

19. A method according to Claim 17 wherein the physical processing step is a sonication step.

20. A method according to Claim 17 wherein the physical processing step is a heating step.

21. A method according to any of Claims 17 to 20 wherein the sample is also subjected to a chemical processing step.

22. Use of a method according to Claim 17 for the processing of a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction.

23. Use of a binding material in a method according to Claim 17 for the processing of a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction.

24. A lid, suitable for closure of a vessel, said lid comprising a membrane and characterised in that said membrane is recessed within the lid.